

# Revelation Chapter 14

## 14:1-5 The Mount Sion in Heaven

*“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”*

A. John sees a Lamb. There can be no doubt as to who this is, it is Christ, compare chapter 5:6.

B. He sees the Lamb standing on Mount Sion. But, where is the location of Mount Sion? Is it on earth or in heaven? Notice these things:

(1) In the bible there are two Mount Sions. There’s the earthly Mount Sion which is one of the hills on which Jerusalem stood. It is first mentioned in the old testament as a Jebusite fortress, 11 Samuel 5:6-9. David captured it and called it the city of David. David then brought the ark to Zion and the hill has henceforth been sacred, 11 Samuel 6:10-12. The name Zion came to be used for all of Jerusalem, 11 Kings 19:21, Isaiah 1:8. Then, there’s the heavenly mount Sion, Romans 11: 26, Hebrews 12:22-25. The city of the living God.

(2) It is not just Mount Sion, it is the Mount Sion. This Mount Sion is obviously in heaven.

C. The whole scenery of these verses is heavenly. Notice:

(1) The Lamb stood on the Mount Sion. It is the resurrected Christ of chapter 5:6.

(2) It is from heaven that John hears a voice and the sound of harps, verse 2, compare chapter 4:5 and 5:6-8.

(3) The 144,000 are said to have God the Father’s name written in their foreheads. This is what was called the seal of the living God in chapter 7:2-3. And, this is in contrast to the mark of the beast that is given his followers. It does not seem that it would be a name inscribed that is visible to the physical eye. But it does tell us that they bear God’s name, they have him in mind, and he knows those who are his. Compare chapter 3:12 and comments.

(4) It is the 144,000 Jews who were sealed in chapter 7 that John now sees before the throne of God in heaven and before the four beast and elders. As already noted, they had been killed by the Antichrist and now John sees that they are in heaven. They are said to be redeemed from the earth, and they are no longer on it. And they are singing a new song that no one knew except them, chapter 4:5, 5:6-8.

(5) The 144,000 are said to be the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. The word firstfruits is by the Apostle Paul in speaking of the first ones saved in a given area, Romans 16:5, or in reference to a number of people saved, James 1:18. This is also used in connection with resurrection. See 1 Corinthians 15:21-23. Christ is said to be the firstfruits from the dead. The firstfruits are always a pledge or promise of more to come. In this text we are to understand that these 144,000 Jews who were the first to be saved through the ministry of the two witnesses, where also the first to suffer martyrdom and enter heaven during the tribulation. There would be an unnumbered multitude who would follow them, Revelation 7:9-17.

(6) These 144,000 are described as virgins who have not defiled themselves with women. It is not that to be sexually active with a woman defiles, for sexual activity within the marriage bed does not defile, Hebrews 13:4. This description of them references their spiritual purity and complete allegiance to God after being saved, for it is clearly said that they were redeemed. Hence, they were sinners who had gotten saved. And the fact that they are without fault before the throne of God is possible only through the blood of Christ, Jude 24.

## 14:6-12 The Message of the flying angels

*“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented*

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*with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”*

In these verses we have three different angels which fly in the midst of heaven, and each one of them delivers a message to those who dwell on the earth during the tribulation time.

**A.** The first angel is called “another angel” because he is in addition to those John had already saw. This angel flies, but we need not suppose that he has wings, for when angels appear in the bible they appear as men without wings. And though the Cherubims and Seraphims do have wings, they are not ordinary angels, they are a special class of angelic beings. And there is no indication that this angel in the text is one of them. It is also interesting to note that a flying demon does have wings and is seen as a woman, Zechariah 5:5-11. This angel flies in the air, not in God’s heaven or in space, but in the air where the birds fly around us, close to the earth. He has what is called the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon the earth. His message, called the everlasting gospel is not to be confused with the gospel of the grace of God that we preach now. In fact angels do not preach the gospel of the grace of God, 1 Peter 1:12, Acts 10:1-7, God uses men to do this. The everlasting gospel is a message in addition to the message of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. It is a message preached by an angel to everyone on earth during the last half of the tribulation calling upon them to fear God and give honour to him as Creator in view of his soon coming hour of judgement, verses 6-7. It is God’s warning to the world that they should not accept the mark of the beast.

**B.** The second angel follows him, evidently also flying through the heavens, but he does not preach a message of repentance as such, he seems rather to only make an announcement concerning God’s judgement on a place or system called Babylon. He says, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” We will see more of Babylon’s fall in chapter 16:19, and in chapter 17 and 18. But for now let’s make these observations:

(1) Babylon will be viewed in her mystery form, the anti-God false religious systems of the world, chapter 17.

(2) Babylon will be viewed as a literal city, very commercial and ungodly. This will either be a rebuilt Babylon similar to ancient Babylon, or it will be modern day Rome. Rome

can actually meet the demands of the text. But whichever it is, the complete fulfillment of this angel’s announcement will be in the chapters just mentioned. It is Babylon in its mystery false religious form that seems to be primarily in view in this angel’s message.

**C.** The third angel follows, evidently also flying, and saying with a loud voice, “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who Worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.” Obviously this is a warning of the severest of judgement. Notice these things:

(1) When once the mark of the beast is accepted, an individual is doomed, they have no hope of ever being forgiven and saved. It seems clear that they cannot decide to have the mark removed, 11 Thessalonians 2:1-11,12.

(2) The message clearly tells us of an eternal hell. It is described as the wine of God’s wrath unmingled with any mercy, compare Revelation 20:14-15, 21:8.

(3) Those who follow the Antichrist and enter the lake of fire will be tormented in the presence of the angels, and of God, verse 10. And, after the new earth is created, Revelation 21: 1, it’s inhabitants, the saved, will actually be able to look upon the lake of fire where the carcasses of the unsaved were cast, Isaiah 66:22-24. You see, this earth will, at the end of the Millennium, be burned up completely and it’s elements will melt, 11 Peter 3: 10. Then, since hell is in the Center of this earth, Numbers 16:30-34, Deuteronomy 32:22, Job 11:8,26:6, Psalms 55:15, Proverbs 15:24, Isaiah 14:9,15, Luke 16:19-31, at the burning of the earth, the whole earth will become a burning lake in space, visible to the new earth, see Revelation 20:14.

(4) The eternal doom of the unsaved is not unconscious, they are conscious. The smoke of their torment ascends up forever and ever, verse 11. Compare Luke 16:19-31. d. Knowing all this is what will help the saints be patient in all his trials and tribulation, verse 12.

This is especially true of the tribulational saints who are really the ones who are referenced in this passage. They have their faith in Jesus Christ and they are keeping the commands of God to not worship anything other than the Lord. They will not bow to the Antichrist nor his image. They will die instead of doing so.

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## 14:13 A Majestic Voice

*“And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do low them.”*

This is certainly a majestic voice with a majestic message for the precious saints of God. Notice: a. It is primarily a message of assurance, hope, and blessing to the tribulational saints who will be killed by the Antichrist. They are promised sweet rest with the Lord. They are also Promised a reward for all their labour for the Lord. “Their works do follow them” This is to say that they will be rewarded in heaven, they will be recognized for their work and sacrifice for Christ.

B. This is a promise that is applicable to all the saved in any dispensation who love and faithfully serve the Lord. Compare 1 Corinthians 3:11-14, and Hebrews 6:10.

## 14:14-20 The Misery of Armageddon

*“And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.”*

There are some things which are very plain about these verses. For instance, verses 17-20 are clearly a reference to, and descriptive of Armageddon, compare chapter 16:14-16, 19:11-21. But, verses 14-16 present some difficulty because they are much like verses 17-20 and different in some respects. Does this section of scripture describe just one harvest, a harvest of judgement (Armageddon)? Or do they describe two harvests? Or, is a harvest referenced in verses 14-16 with the vintage, the produce of or result of that harvest, being referenced in verses 17-20? These are not easy questions to answer and it is difficult to be dogmatic about them. However, there are some things that may help us:

A. In Matthew 13:24-30 Jesus gave the parable of the wheat and tares. And then when the disciples ask him to explain it, he did, Matthew 13:36-43. Here is Christ's explanation.

(1) The sower of the good seed is the Son of man, Christ himself Matthew 13:37.

(2) The field is the world, Matthew 13:38.

(3) The good seed are the children of the God's kingdom, and particularly those during the tribulation because the parable ends with the establishment of the Lord's Millennium, Matthew 13:38.

(4) The tares are the children of the wicked one, which is the devil, Matthew 13:38-39.

(5) The tares are sowed in the world field by the devil, Matthew 13:39.

(6) The harvest time is the end of the world, Matthew 13:39. This is a reference to the end of the age or tribulation which ends this world system and begins the Millennium. And, the situation we are studying in Revelation 14:14-20 is also at the end of the tribulation just prior to the establishment of the Millennium.

(7) The reapers are the angels. Just as we see them reaping here in Revelation 14:14-20.

(8) The tares are the children of the devil living during the tribulation time which are gathered first, see Matthew 13:30, 40-43. And then afterward, the wheat, the children of God, are gathered last and are put into God's barn, his Millennial kingdom!

So, it seems to me that Jesus gave the basic order of things concerning his second advent. Those who have died in the Lord return with him at his return to the earth and the battle of Armageddon is the immediate result, Revelation 19:11-21, Matthew 25:31-46. Then, after Armageddon, the living saved enter the Millennium along with the resurrected saved, Matthew 13:43, Revelation 20:1-6.

B. Now, on the basis of all the above, here is what seems to be the sense of the passage. John has a vision of the second coming of Christ. He sees Christ, the Son of man, sitting upon a white cloud, compare Revelation 1:7. He has a sharp sickle in his hand. John then sees another angel coming out of the temple who encourages him to reap because the harvest of the earth is ripe and it is time to do so. John then sees that Christ did so, verses 14-16. Since that which Christ harvests here isn't said to be bad and since it is set in contrast to that which is clearly bad and is therefore judged in verse 19, I therefore conclude that this is a reference to the harvest of the saved, the children of the kingdom into the Millennium. And then I conclude that verses 17-20 is the Armageddon harvest of the wicked unsaved as Jesus Christ touches down on the earth, Revelation 19:11-21.

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Notice:

1. John sees still another angel come out of the temple in heaven with a sharp sickle in his hands, verse 17.

2. Still another angel is seen coming from the altar in heaven. This angel has power over fire, (he seems to function in the same manner as the one in chapter 8:5) He cries with a loud voice to the angel of verse 17, which does not seem to be Christ, and encourages him to use his sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. The angel does so and reaps and we know that this is a harvest of the wicked unsaved because he cast them into the great winepress of the wrath of God, verse 19. This angel is probably just one representative of many who are used in severing the wicked from among the just, Matthew 13:49-50.

3. The result of this harvest is horrifying. It is said that the winepress was trodden without the city, and the blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs. This is the event described in Revelation 19:11-21, Isaiah 63:1-6, Joel 3:12-16, and Zechariah 14:1-15, and other places. The death and devastation resulting from Armageddon covers an area some 160 to 180 miles, horse bridge deep. It's a river of blood! Obviously this is too horrible to understand fully, but, after this event Psalms 2:1-8 will become a reality. God will set King Jesus upon the throne in Jerusalem and the world shall enjoy the golden age of the Millennium.